

## **Los Angeles City Councilman Jack Weiss**

Jack Weiss was elected to the Los Angeles City Council in June 2001 to represent the Fifth Council District, which spans the hillsides to include parts of the San Fernando Valley and West Los Angeles. The communities he serves include Sherman Oaks, Valley Village and Encino, and Westwood, Century City, Beverlywood, the Fairfax District, Cheviot Hills and Carthay Circle, as well as the hillside communities between the 405 Freeway and Laurel Canyon.

Councilmember Weiss is committed to improve the safety and quality of life of the people and neighborhoods in his District. His top priorities are to strengthen City services and to respond to community concerns. This dedication to creating a better Los Angeles guides his service as Chair of the Council's Arts, Health and Humanities Committee, which oversees the City's extensive system of parks and recreation facilities, libraries, senior centers, the zoo, and cultural and historic affairs. He also serves as Vice Chair of the Council's Budget and Finance Committee.

One of Councilmember Weiss' goals is to improve the City's ability to prevent disasters and respond to emergencies. Improved police and fire equipment, identifying threats, and coordinated response are significant elements of his approach. Through his position on the Council's Public Safety Committee, he pursues these issues as well as meaningful reform in the Police Department. In November 2002, he was selected as "New Democrat of the Week" by the Democratic Leadership Council in recognition of his work on local homeland security issues.

Prior to his election, Councilmember Weiss served as an Assistant United States Attorney in Los Angeles, where he was assigned to the Public Corruption and Government Fraud Section. He focused on criminal prosecutions involving sophisticated white collar crimes, corrupt public officials, civil rights violations, and violent crimes.

Councilmember Weiss received his law degree from UCLA, where he was Editor-in-Chief of the UCLA Law Review. He served as a law clerk to United States District Court Judge Lourdes G. Baird and practiced law in Century City prior to his service in the United States Attorney's Office.

Councilmember Weiss received his undergraduate degree with honors from Princeton University, where he majored in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. Before returning to law school, he worked as a foreign policy adviser on Capitol Hill and as an arms control researcher in Washington, D.C. He is married to Leslie Kautz, a former Pentagon policy analyst who is a co-founder of an investment advisory firm. They have two young children.

**LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCILMEMBER JACK WEISS**  
**PREPARED STATEMENT FOR**  
**THE HOUSE DEMOCRATIC TASK FORCE ON**  
**HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**June 24, 2003**

Since September 11, 2001, cities such as Los Angeles have scrambled to improve local threat preparedness to protect citizens from the next terrorist attack. Despite numerous announcements of federal funds for local security, the federal grants provided to date have been insufficient to meet the needs of our cities and have been unfairly distributed. In my opinion, the Administration has failed to provide real financial, technical, and coordinated assistance to secure Los Angeles and America's other big cities from the next wave of terrorist attacks.

Consider the following bottom line figure. As of today - over 21 months since the September 11 attacks - the City of Los Angeles has essentially only received approximately \$40 million in new federal antiterrorist funding. While sparsely populated Wyoming has received \$35.31 per person in recent federal grant funding, target-rich California has received only \$4.68 per person. Because of flawed priorities, the pattern of neglect of our cities' antiterrorist needs has taken hold.

The needs of the City of Los Angeles, at 3.5 million people our nation's second-largest, are quite significant. I have previously identified \$100 million in immediate security needs (including \$10 million for training, \$5-10 million for intelligence, \$12 million for the Los Angeles County Terrorism Early Warning Group, and \$35 million for perimeter control and credentialing at the Port (see attachment 1, February 5, 2003 letter to Representative Christopher Cox)). Representative Jane Harman has identified \$100-200 million in immediate needs in Los Angeles County. Other City officials have identified approximately \$148 million in other needs as well. All told, these would appear to be significant figures, yet they appear somewhat modest when one considers the full cost of, for example, winning the war and the peace in Iraq.

Moreover, these figures do not include costs associated with personnel. Los Angeles is perilously understaffed in counterterrorist and emergency response functions. For example, staffing of the Los Angeles Police Department's ("LAPD") Anti-Terrorist Division ("ATD") should be doubled, requiring an additional fifty people and approximately \$5 million per year. Los Angeles incurs substantial costs when the Department of Homeland Security raises the threat level from yellow to orange - approximately \$1.5 million per week citywide, and an additional \$1 million per week at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

These costs have arisen at a time of substantial budgetary uncertainty in Los Angeles. City government recently decided to slow the pace of new police hiring - from 720 new officers over the next twelve months to 400 officers over the next six months (resulting in a savings of approximately \$30 million), and to defer a \$5 million reorganization of the LAPD due to the State of California's budget crisis. Further actions in Sacramento could actually result in the City laying off cops and firefighters.

At the same time, the City Council recently approved my measure to purchase \$4.4 million in WMD personal protective gear for first responders. While controversial, the measure was finally passed in March 2003, over 18 months after the September 11 attacks, due to the Administration's failure to provide the City with this equipment or the necessary funding. If an earthquake, accident or terrorist strike occurs in Los Angeles, City police, fire, and rescue officers - not federal agencies - will be the first on the scene. Our local government needs to prepare and respond faster than ever before. I founded and led the City's Threat Preparedness Task Force to identify and address our security needs. As a result of the work of the task force, the City allocated local funds to increase its Hazmat and bomb squad capabilities.

In October 2002, I wrote and released, "Preparing Los Angeles for Terrorism - A Ten-Point Plan" to identify local needs and strategies to address them (see attachment; also available at [www.lacity.org/council/cd5](http://www.lacity.org/council/cd5)). Since October many of my recommendations have been adopted by the City, including hiring a national leader to oversee all homeland security functions and the creation of a 24-hour tip-line for citizens to report suspicious activity. I will continue to work to improve the City's security with or without federal support. However, our ability to implement changes to all ten points of my plan has been severely limited by a lack of funds and leadership from the Administration.

There have been rays of progress. For example, in April 2003 Congress passed Sen. Dianne Feinstein's measure to provide \$109 million in funding to address the communications interoperability problems of our major cities' fire and police departments (see attachment). Los Angeles is the second largest city in the nation, and has been an identified target of Al Qaeda and other terrorists in the past. We have every reason to believe that Los Angeles will be targeted again because once Al Qaeda identifies a target, it does not give up. Our hope is that Washington will recognize and address our local security needs before Al Qaeda realizes the opportunities for destruction and disruption that Los Angeles offers.

February 5, 2003

The Honorable Christopher Cox  
United States House of Representatives  
2402 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
FAX - (202) 225-9177

BY FACSIMILE AND U.S. MAIL

Re: Los Angeles' Homeland Security Needs

Dear Congressman Cox:

During our recent radio discussion on KCRW's "Which Way, L.A.?" you requested that I provide you with additional information regarding Los Angeles' homeland security needs.

Because Los Angeles is the nation's second largest city and has been a previous target of Al Qaeda and other terrorists, our City must increase its capabilities to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks. Some of these efforts must come at the local level, while others will require substantial federal assistance, as I noted in my October 2002 report *Preparing Los Angeles for Terrorism - A Ten Point Plan* (I have enclosed a copy of the report for your review; it may be retrieved on the web at [www.lacity.org/council/cd5](http://www.lacity.org/council/cd5)).

As you requested, I have identified five specific areas where Los Angeles urgently needs federal assistance. I hope that you and your Southern California Congressional colleagues will work together to obtain these critical resources so Los Angeles can be the best prepared big city in the nation.

I would be eager to meet with you to discuss these matters further or to present testimony before any relevant Congressional committees. Please feel free to contact either myself or my policy deputy, Matt Gallagher, at (213) 485-5013 if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

JACK WEISS

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The Honorable Jane Harman  
The Honorable Howard Berman  
The Honorable Adam Schiff